

Mayors' Infrastructure Finance Committee: Recommended Implementation Program

Proposed by Finance Work Group, April 23, 2003

- 1 ■ Move immediately to the Implementation Phase** – The Mayor's Infrastructure Financing Committee Process has focused substantial community attention on the funding needs of Lincoln's infrastructure. The process has highlighted specific improvements necessary to maintain and expand the city's water, wastewater, streets, stormwater and park systems. These improvements reflect the community's desire to maintain our existing investment in such facilities and the knowledge that growth brings with it a commitment to support new development.

The need to move swiftly to implement the process's recommendation is paramount. Infrastructure development can take years to achieve. Work must begin immediately to inform the community about the status of the community's infrastructure systems and of the need to move forward quickly with the necessary funding.

A ■ Create an Infrastructure Financing Public-Private Coalition –

Immediate steps should be taken to create a public-private coalition with as many organizations as possible to engage in the implementation phase of this process. This should include identification of "champions" (i.e., organizations and individuals) to lead the implementation phase.

- B ■ Keep Committee and Work Group Members Involved** – For over six months, nearly 50 Lincoln citizens have worked diligently to develop a workable infrastructure financing package. This package has been crafted from numerous meetings involving hundreds of hours of community dialogue about Lincoln's future and the role infrastructure plays in maintaining our quality of life. This investment of time has created a vast common understanding of how the City plans and builds its infrastructure. This community-based body of knowledge must not be lost.

Members of the Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee and its three Work Groups should stay involved in implementing the recommendations. Participation

by the Committee and Work Group members should be sought for the Implementation Phase. This may include speaking to community and neighborhood organizations, meeting with elected officials and other community leaders, and being available to assist in refinements to the implementation package.

- C ■ Undertake a Community Education Effort Concerning Infrastructure Financing Needs** -- The task of educating the community about the City's infrastructure financing needs should be accomplished through the public-private coalition. City staff can provide technical and logistic support in defining the funding and facilities baseline needs. However, ensuring widespread community support will require assistance from businesses, neighborhoods, and public sector leaders to fully articulate the broad benefits to be gained from maintaining and enhancing our infrastructure facilities. This effort will begin with the release of the Committee's Final Report to the Mayor and Lincoln City Council.

- 2 ■ Actively Support Proposed Fee and Tax Increases** – The Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee and Work Groups recommendations include increases in utility users fee and other taxes to pay for necessary infrastructure improvements. All of these increases will require City Council-Mayoral action and/or a vote of the electorate.

An active marketing effort should be established to ensure the community fully understands the value of infrastructure improvements and how they and the community will benefit in the long term. This effort cannot – by law – be initiated and run by the City. A separate private entity will need to be created to pursue this work. Establishment of such a entity should occur early in the implementation phase of this program and should be responsible for coordinating and spearheading the presentation of key information to the community and media.